THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

252 with wood and fired; pots are placed in rows upon them. The motiari husk and clean the rice, and make the leaf-cups and plates, but the boys do the actual cooking. When the rice is ready it is tipped out in a great pile on bamboo mats. A pig, which is killed by being beaten on the head with a rice husker, is roasted in the fire till its hair is burnt off; it is skinned and cleaned. Flesh, bones and skin are cut up into little squares of equal size—an important matter, for it is essential that everyone should receive exactly the same amount. These pieces are fried in mahua oil, and put into large earthen pots with rice-water, salt, haldi and chilli and boiled till ready. Fish is prepared in much the same way, except that usually something sour is added to flavour it. Fowls are cooked in leaf-cups. The intestines are squeezed out, and the whole chicken with head and feet is roasted with a little salt. Eggs are wrapped in leaves and baked in the fire. Mongoose flesh is roasted and spiced with dried mangoes. Crocodile is boiled.

264 At the ghotul feasts and marriages I have attended everyone sits round in a big circle, and the boys (sometimes assisted by a few motiari) serve the food. The bits of meat are carefully counted out into leaf-cups and distributed. Rice is served from baskets or winnowing-fans direct onto leaf-plates.

At home, the family sits round the pot of jawa, which is taken straight off the fire and placed in the middle of the floor. Each has a little chutney on a leaf in front of him and an empty leaf-cup. The mother dips a gourd into the pot and helps the little children; then each member of the family helps himself. There is no idea that men should eat before women or elders before the children.

262 Doctors say that the Muria's food lacks fat and protein and criticise them 146 for not taking more milk, ghee and vegetable. No doubt the Muria, like other people, would eat more of these things if they could get them. But there is no doubt that they do not like milk, and rarely take it themselves or give it to their children.

● 731 Famine is not common in Bastar, for the people can fall back on the almost limitless products of the forests. But it has been known, and a sombre song preserves its memory.

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Nimdre weke dāniona rawalni	Vulture, whither away, vulture?
Dori bhumi dāutona dāda le	I am going towards the west, brother,
Bhumi dukhr dukhr roy dāda le	For the day of want has dawned.
Bhumi te dukhr arit roy dāda le	The famine is over all the world
Hihli haro bhaiso roy dāda le	Black, black are the buffaloes,
Sarpane bhaiso arit roy dāda le	And all of them have died, brother.
Podar pungār doyo roy dāda le	White as cotton flowers are the cows,
Sarpane doyo arāu roy dāda le	And all of them have fallen in summer.
Pukle dhelāk rawalī roy dāda le	On the broken clod the vulture,
Walo marāk kawrāl roy dāda le	On the withered tree the crow,
Kawar wohar inis roy dāda le	The crow is cawing, brother.
Raiyaka rayon kawrāl roy dāda le	It is ready to fly down.

VI. Honey

222 539 Honey was discovered by a Maria named Waddai who also gave his name to the whole succession of Waddai diviners. 'Waddai went one day to a medium, with a gift of char nuts, seeking help for his sick son. On the way he met a monkey which had been entranced for falling while jumping from a tree and